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"SPEAK UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, THAT THEY GO FORWARD."—Exodus. xiv., 15.

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Religious Intelligence.

JAFFNA.

Situation, Inhabitants, &c.—Ceylon is an island, lying between 6° and 10° north latitude, and 78° and 82° longitude, at the entrance of the Bay of Bengal, and near the coast of southern India. It is about 300 miles long, with a width varying from 40 miles to 100 and more. The coasts on the north and north-west are flat, and everywhere indented with inlets from the sea. The interior of the island abounds with steep and lofty mountains, covered with dense forests, and full of almost impenetrable jungles. In ancient times it was celebrated for its elephants, its precious stones and pearls; but it is more noted now for its cinnamon. It was lost for a long time in the dark ages to the European world, but the Portuguese, having re-discovered it in 1505, obtained extensive possessions on its coasts; all which, however, in about a century and a half, passed into the hands of the Dutch. Near the close of the last century, the Dutch were dispossessed by the English, who in 1815 completed the conquest of the whole island. Among the Tamil people, Hindooism prevails. The Cingalese are very extensively Buddhists. The Malays, who are about 70,000 in number, are Mohammedans.

The inhabitants consists of Cingalese, who occupy the interior and southern portions of the island; of Tamilians, occupying the northern part; of Malays, who are found scattered in all parts; and of a race, met with in the deepest recesses of the forests, corresponding with no other in the eastern world, and supposed by some to have been the inhabitants at the time of its invasion by the Cingalese, and to have withdrawn to these fastnesses, that they might enjoy their independence. Besides, there are the descendants of the Portuguese and Dutch to the number of some thousands, and several hundred English. The number of inhabitants has been rapidly increasing of late, and now amounts to about 1,250,000; which still, is but a small part of what the island is capable of supporting.

Christianization.—At what time the gospel was first planted in the island is not known. In the sixth century, so many Christian merchants from Persia resided here for purposes of commerce, that a church was built for their use. Xavier is said to have found 20,000 native Christians when he came to the island, who claimed to trace back their ecclesiastical history to Thomas, the Apostle. Xavier numbered 40,000 as his converts. The Portuguese, by the exercise of government influence and authority, as also in various other ways, induced many to become Roman Catholics; and the Dutch, in turn, used vigorous efforts to establish Protestantism. They forbade the rebuilding of heathen temples, they allowed no public idolatrous ceremonies, they made the profession of Christianity a qualification for all important offices; but notwithstanding, the number of nominal Christians diminished; and the English, when they came into possession allowing the free exercise of all religions, Christianity, which for centuries had scarcely any other existence among the natives than in name, soon became very near extinct. In 1801, the number who professed the Protestant faith was estimated at 342,000,

while the adherents of the Romish faith were even more numerous; in 1816, in the district of Jaffna, which had been the most thoroughly evangelized, after the manner of the Portuguese and the Dutch, of any part of the country, there were only a few thousands professing the Catholic faith, and the number of Protestants was very small indeed, so rapidly do a people fall back into heathenism, when the change in their belief is the result of any thing else than sincere conviction.

Stations.—The Ceylon mission is confined to Jaffna. This district, which occupies the northern extremity of Ceylon, is composed of a cluster of islands, separated from each other by narrow creeks, and rising but little above the level of the sea. Its position, relative both to the main island and to Madras, may be seen from the map in the *Journal* for July. It is about 10 miles in breadth by 15 in width, and has a population of 225,000. The Portuguese divided it into 32 parishes, the boundaries of which are indicated on the map by dotted lines. In each of these they built a church and a house for a parsonage, to which was attached a piece of land for a garden. When the missionaries arrived, the roofs of these buildings had fallen in, but the walls of many of them having been built of durable materials, they were capable of being repaired; and the British government gave the use of them to the mission. Tillipally, which has a population of 7,651, and in which are 133 temples, was first occupied. The buildings were found in a tolerable state of preservation, though having neither roof, doors nor windows; and were so far refitted that Messrs. Warren and Poor moved into them, Oct. 15, 1816. At Batticotta, eight miles distant, were found the remains of what was considered the finest church on the island. The walls, of coral, were four feet thick, and inclosed a space 163 feet long and 57 wide. Two rows of pillars, ten in a row, and each ten feet in circumference, ran along the centre, bearing up arches intended to support the roof. There were also the wall of a dwelling-house, more than one hundred feet long, and of five small out-buildings. In the rear was a garden of nearly two acres, surrounded by a high wall of coral, and containing three wells. On the premises were 62 trees, 29 of which, being the palmyra, would support a native. The situation was within a view of the sea, in the midst of rice grounds, above which it was slightly elevated. As soon as the necessary repairs could be effected, Messrs. Richards and Meigs entered upon this station. It is the seat of the male seminary. In 1820 Oodooville, now the seat of the female seminary, and Pandertemp, were occupied. The printing establishment began its operation in 1831, in Manepi, a station which was commenced in 1821. Stations were formed in 1834 in Chavagacherry, which has a population of 13,600, and in Varany, fifteen miles east of Oodooville, where there are 12,000 inhabitants. Oodoopty first appears as a station in 1846. There are, besides, five out-stations. Encouraging efforts are now making a more thorough occupancy of the field by the gospel; and with such influences of the Spirit on their labors, as the missionaries are expecting, it will be made to flourish as the garden of the Lord.—*Jour. of Miss.*

INDIA AS A MISSIONARY FIELD.

The subjugation of the whole of Hindestan by a Christian nation more than 15,000 miles distant, is one of the most wonderful facts of modern times. No part of history shows more clearly the hand of God, or in a more striking manner fulfils the prophetic declarations of his holy word in reference to the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom. The stone which was cut out of the mountains without hands, is smiting the kingdoms of the earth.

By this overruling Providence, one of the largest, most populous, and wealthy portions of heathenism, has been opened to the gospel. Never before has the Church had so large a field for her efforts of benevolence.

This vast empire extends from Peshawer to Cape Comorin, near 2000 miles, and from the Indus to the Bralnanputr, more than 1500, containing 1,287,000 square miles, an area as large as the whole of Europe, omitting Russia, and as large as the six Eastern, four Middle, nine Southern, and the Western States of America. Besides, it contains nearly three times the number of inhabitants found in the whole of North and South America; and to that immense region, containing a population, it is calculated, amounting to over one hundred and fifty eight millions of worshippers of stocks and stones, and beasts and reptiles, there are only about four hundred Christians missionaries! Has the church no work to do that Christ may have the heathen for his inheritance?